

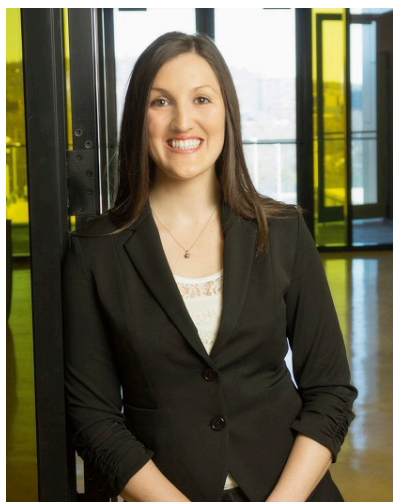
# Public Policy Bulletin

Fall 2015

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Welcome New Students!

## Merideth Adkins- Community Development



*Meredith is a Fayetteville, Arkansas native. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Colorado at Boulder (2006), and a master's degree in political science/international relations with an interdisciplinary certificate in international development studies from Colorado State University (2010). She currently is Assistant Director for MBA Programs in the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas. Prior to this position, she worked for the Office of Study Abroad & International Exchange as faculty-led study abroad program coordinator. Meredith has traveled extensively and worked outside of Arkansas, including internships with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, in Washington, D.C. and the public affairs office at the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, as well as four years teaching political science for the Front Range Community College network (Colorado). She also spent a year in Senegal as a regional teacher training coordinator for an international foundation, prior to moving back to Fayetteville. Meredith's research interests include sustainable economic development, specifically, post-conflict development in countries recovering from civil war. In her free time, she enjoys outdoor sports, particularly horseback riding, snowboarding, and water sports.*

## Teresa Garcia- Agricultural Policy

*Teresa holds an LL.B. degree from Londrina State University, Brazil, and an LL.M degree in Agriculture and Food Law from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Teresa is an experienced professional and a licensed attorney from Brazil, where she served as an associate attorney with RL – Assessoria Jurídica. She also served as an intern with the First Level Federal Court, Office of Legal Affairs, and the Federal Prosecutor's Office in Brazil. She has undertaken numerous research projects and has presented papers at academic conferences. Her research interests are primarily international agricultural policy, agricultural and food law and policy, and the role of agriculture in developing countries.*



Inside: \*New Students \*SPARK \*Student Achievements \*Dissertation Award \*Student-Faculty  
\*Collaboration \*Alumni Highlights \*RPD

## Rachel M. Moyer- Policy Management



*Rachael has been interested in human behavior for some time. She investigated the meaning behind prehistoric rock art at an archaeological site in Missouri while pursuing her B.A. in Anthropology at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Following nearly a decade of work in marketing, Rachael completed her M.A. in Political Science at the University of Arkansas where her thesis investigated the triadic relationships between culturally biased value predispositions, affective feelings, and the perceived benefits and risks related to high voltage power lines among policy elites in Arkansas. The recipient of a GSIE Distinguished Doctoral Fellowship, Rachael is pursuing a Ph.D. in Public Policy and a M.S. in Statistics and Analytics. Her research interests include policy process theories, energy and environmental policy, political behavior, risk and public policy, and political methodology/statistical analysis. When she is not reading or writing she enjoys playing cello, backpacking outdoors, traveling, and spending time with her family.*

## Larra Rucker- Family Policy

*Larra holds a B.A. in Child Development (2011) from California State University, Stanislaus and a M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences (2013) from the University of Arkansas. Throughout her B.A. and M.S. degrees, and in the time since, she has worked as a teacher at high-quality centers in both California and Arkansas where she has trained and mentored many future teachers. She enjoys working with all children but has a strong passion and drive to advocate for the birth-to-3 age group. Her past research involves the feeding practices of parents with young children. She has presented at many professional conferences on the topics of parent education, children's eating behaviors, and infant and toddler experiences. Larra's research interests include pre-term birth and child care. She plans to pursue a career in research to influence policy concerning the critical development that happens during the first three years of life. Larra holds a GSIE Distinguished Academic Fellowship.*





# New Students (can't)

## Grant Howard West -Agricultural Policy



Grant is from Fayetteville, Arkansas and his interests lie at the nexus of public policy, economics, and the environment. He graduated from the University of Arkansas cum laude in 2008 with a B.A. in Geography and a minor in History. During this time he was able to travel to Hong Kong on an Honors Thesis Travel Grant in order to examine the the political and economic effects of the reversion of Hong Kong's sovereignty. Grant completed an M.A. in Geography in 2011 and served in Assistantships with the Tree-Ring Laboratory in the Department of Geosciences, the UA Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (C.A.S.T.), and as a GIS Intern with The Nature Conservancy in Fayetteville. Following his Masters studies, Grant served as an Adjunct Professor at both Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) and Missouri Southern State University (MSSU), where he taught courses in Human and Physical geography. Grant joined the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agri-

business at the University of Arkansas as a Research Program Associate in April 2013 where he supports faculty research and technology initiatives and assists with technology and student research. He has co-authored multiple articles published in peer-reviewed journals, including the Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics and the Journal of Environmental Management. Grant is committed to exploring solutions to the systemic problems confronting society with respect to the environment and our food and fiber system as well as forging a career in policy research and action.

## SPARK News

The first SPARK meeting of the 2015-16 school year was held August 27th. New officers for 2015-16 were elected. Marei Houpert (Agricultural Policy) will be the SPARK president. The new secretary is Grant Howard (Agricultural Policy) and the new student representative to the PUBP Faculty Committee is Larra Rucker (Family Policy).

The new officers held a BBQ, hosted by Merideth Adkins and her husband Michael. Food, drinks, and games shared by SPARK members and their families made this a wonderful event for the beginning of the Fall semester. SPARK members discussed the design and logistics of t-shirts, hats, and hoodies.



From left to right: Marei Houpert, Michael and Merideth Adkins, and Ruby and Grant Howard.

# Student Achievements

This section of the newsletter highlights notable achievements by students in the Public Policy Program. Britni Ayers and Nathan Kemper each received recognition for outstanding teaching.



Britni Ayers

Britni Ayers, a doctoral candidate in the Public Policy Ph.D. Program, was recently named Outstanding Teacher by members of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority at the organization's annual scholarship banquet.

From 2012-2014 Britni co-taught a graduate level social work research methods class, and for the last year she has taught two classes of American National Government (ANG). In spring of 2016 she will teach a new Family Policy class in the Political Science Department and one class of ANG.

Britni finished her qualifying exams in fall of 2014. She is currently working on her dissertation which she plans to complete by summer of 2016. Her research interests include family policy, breastfeeding and childbirth policy, and maternal leave policy. Britni has two publications "Do Birds of a Feather Flock Together? A Social Network Study of Friendship Networks among College Students" in the Journal of Current Issues in Media & Telecommunications (with Yang, S.), and "Ourtown for Teens: Long-term Impact of a Youth Diversity Program" in Child & Youth Services (with Stauss, K., Koh, E., Coustaut, C.).

Britni would like to continue teaching and conducting research on women's health policy.

Nathan Kemper, a doctoral candidate in the Public Policy Ph.D. Program, was recently honored with the "Outstanding Teaching Award" for the 2014-15 academic year. Each year undergraduate students in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business select a faculty member to receive the award. The award is presented during the Agricultural Business Club's spring banquet.

Nathan's courses cover a wide range of topics from basic microeconomics and food system management to honors courses and advanced food marketing. Nathan began teaching at the UA in 2013 and received the award after only three semesters of teaching in the department.

Nathan passed his Ph.D. qualifying exams over the summer and is currently working on completing his dissertation research. His area of emphasis is food policy economics. His research examines consumer preferences for non-genetically modified (non-GM) food and the policy and market implications associated with various policy designs for labeling the GM content of food. Nathan plans to complete his research and graduate during the 2015-2016 academic year.



Nathan and his daughter Grace (5 years)



Dr. Sonia Kapur was the recipient of the 2014 PUBP Best Dissertation award.

Dr. Sonia Kapur won the PUBP Best Dissertation Award for her dissertation: *“Individual, Organizational, and Policy Related Aspects of Immigration and Domestic Violence: The Perspectives of Advocates working with Asian Indian Marriage Migrants.”*

Placing Asian Indian marriage migrants at the center of analysis, the study explores three distinct but inter-related aspects of domestic violence and immigration. First, it examines shifting salience of intersectional categories in shaping the domestic violence experiences of Asian Indian marriage migrants. Second, it examines services provided and challenges faced by non-profit organizations in addressing the intersectional needs of Asian Indian marriage migrants. Third, it analyzes the impact of immigration related provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) on the domestic violence related experiences of Asian Indian marriage migrants.

The theoretical perspective guiding the study is intersectionality. The study is based on 26 in-depth interviews with advocates from fourteen non-profit organizations across four states: California, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. The findings indicate the existence of three broad patterns wherein the salience of intersectional categories defining women’s locations and

domestic violence experiences is derived from the structural contexts of the origin and/or host countries. Second, the study indicates that non-profit organizations address the intersectional needs of clients by providing culture-oriented services. Additionally, the study suggests that organizations face intersectional dilemmas in trying to meet the needs of clients; these dilemmas can be best addressed by coalition building within and between Asian Indian and mainstream focused organizations.

With regard to immigrant provisions of VAWA, the study indicates the existence of five major gaps that differentially impact the lived experiences of Asian Indian marriage migrants based on their immigration status categories. Moreover, the interrelated nature of the policy provisions requires coordinated efforts between agencies.

Exploring the individual, organizational, and policy-related aspects of the problem of domestic violence among Asian Indian marriage migrants, the research concludes that at present our ability to address the problem of domestic violence among the Asian Indian marriage migrants is limited by socio-cultural and institutional factors.



Dr. Sonia Kapur and Dr. Anna Zajicek

*This Public Policy Bulletin is edited by Jonathan Langner.  
Please email any comments or questions to  
Dr. Brinck Kerr at [jbkerr@uark.edu](mailto:jbkerr@uark.edu)*

Jen Dean and Dr. Chris Goering will present collaborative work at the Friday, October 30th (11:30- 1:00, Old Main 523) PUBP Research & Professional Development (RPD) session stemming from their analyses of school films and documentaries. The pair, along with colleague Brandon Flammang, wrote a book chapter accepted for 2016 titled, "Preparing Teachers in the Time of Superman: The Accountability Narrative of School Documentary Films, 2010-2011" in Melanie Shoffner's (Purdue University) forthcoming edited collection, *Saviors, Scapegoats, and Schoolmarms: Examining the Teacher in Fiction and Film for Teacher Education*.

The presentation will detail the process for analyzing education documentaries and schools films, grounded in cultural studies and critical pedagogy, a technique that could be taken and used in other areas and for other purposes. Dean and Goering contend it's important to consider cultural products like documentaries and films, as they are not only products of but also influence key policies in a variety of areas including education.

From the chapter, "What remains true and at the heart of the matter is that the working conditions of teachers are the learning conditions of not only students but also those of future teachers, condi-

tions we argue are under constant and consistent attack from myriad sources including both feature and documentary film genres. For \$9.50 per movie ticket, one can learn about a version of teaching faded in and spliced from reality, dystopia, and popular mythology." The analysis considered three education documentaries: *Waiting for Superman*, *The Lottery*, and *American Teacher*, released in 2010-2011, chosen for analysis based on the fact that *Waiting for Superman* was released with great fanfare and reaction in 2010 and that they represent different political and educational perspectives. Through their analysis Dean and Goering found that while two of the documentaries contained very explicit messages of accountability, the other film continued the exaltation of accountability through unintentional subversion.

Following their collaboration, Dean went on to write a chapter for Mary Dalton's upcoming collection of essays, *Screen Lessons*. Dean's chapter in the section "Gender, Sexuality, and Teaching" explores the replaceability and objectification of Miss Cross, a young female teacher, in Wes Anderson's *Rushmore*. Dean references Bernini's sculpture, *Apollo and Daphne*, as an analog for Anderson's Miss Cross and the film's male characters.



Dr. Chris Goering and Jennifer Dean

Dr. Sonia Kapur graduated from the Public Policy Ph.D. Program in 2014 and is currently an Assistant Professor of International Studies at University of North Carolina Asheville (UNCA)



## Dr. Sonia Kapur

Ph.D. in Public Policy (Family Policy specialization), University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (2014)

Ph.D. in Sociology, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (2003)

M.Phil. in Sociology, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (2000)

M.A. in Sociology, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (1998)

B.A. in Sociology, Delhi University, Delhi, India (1996)

### **In which department are you presently working and what is your role?**

I am an Assistant Professor of International Studies at the University of North Carolina Asheville (UNCA), which is designated as the liberal arts institution of the UNC system. I teach courses on global studies, ethnicity and nation-building in South Asia, and gender and development. In the past year, I also taught the capstone course for the liberal arts core curriculum.

### **What are your current research interests?**

I have published papers in the last year based on my Ph.D. research which concerns individual, organizational, and policy related aspects of domestic violence among Asian Indian communities in the US. I am continuing to work on submitting other publications from this research. Looking forward, I am working on a paper to advance intersectionality as a methodology, and for my next project, I plan to study the realm of inter-country policies with relation to women abandoned in their home country by their domestic partners. Additionally, I am also continuing my research on refugee studies and stratification.

### **What are some of the interesting facts about you?**

I worked for 7 years in the non-profit sector in the areas of child rights and gender issues in South Asian countries. This work gave me the opportunity to travel and experience life in the South Asian countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. I am trying to integrate my knowledge of this work experience into my teaching in the international studies program as well as to find opportunities to contribute to developmental work. Additionally, I have two Ph.D. degrees, one from my home country, India and the other from the United States. Someday I plan to write a book comparing and contrasting the educational experiences in these two interesting and different contexts.



## Research and Professional Development (RPD) Series

The Research and Professional Development (RPD) series includes research presentations as well as discussions/presentations on professional development, both inside and outside of the academy. These sessions are organized as faculty and student panel discussions, or in the alternative, as research presentations.

In the Spring of 2015, two RPD sessions were held. In the first, two presentations were held. Anne Diallo presented her research, **“The Impact of Stakeholders and Interorganizational Capacity on Public-Private Collaborations.”** In the second, Britni Ayers, Nathan Kemper, and Lindsay Turner presented their research, **“Food Security on Campus: A Framework for Analysis.”**

The second session featured Dr. Jean Henry and Dr. Alishia Ferguson who presented findings and experiences from their work: **“Age-Friendly Fayetteville: Community-Based Policy Research.”**

We are very grateful to the presenters as well as to those who attended.



Dr. Jean Henry and Dr. Alishia Ferguson



Lou Tobian (AARP), Dr. Valerie Hunt, and Dr. Brinck Kerr

## 3 New RPD Sessions this Fall!

### Friday, October 30 from 11:30-1:00 in Old Main 523.

Dr. Chris Goering and Jen Dean will present their research, “Preparing Teachers in the Time of Superman: The Accountability Narrative of Education Documentaries.” (Brandon Flammang (not presenting) is a coauthor on this project.)

### Friday, November 6th from 11:30-1:00 in Old Main 523.

Dr. John Gaber and Dr. Michael Flanigan will present their research, “Reflections on the Investigation of Hip-pietowns: Exploring the spaces between theory, method, and conclusions.”

Rachael Moyer will present her research, “What Drives a Policy Elite’s Perspective of Who Should Make Policy Decisions?” (Creed Tumlison and Dr. Geoboo Song are coauthors on this project.)

### Friday, November 20th from 11:30-100 in Old Main 523.

Dr. Brinck Kerr will give a professional development presentation, “The Successful Job Search: Goals and Strategies for Public Policy Ph.D. Students.”